

Childers Discusses Agriculture Disaster Assistance with Mississippi Producers

September 21, 2010

Washington, DC – Today, U.S. Rep. Travis Childers (MS-01) held an event with Mississippi producers at the Mississippi State University Extension Service in Verona to discuss the recent release of much-needed disaster assistance for farmers hit hard by last fall's heavy rains. Childers has been leading the way over the past year to secure these funds. Last week, USDA finally announced the availability of \$550 million in crop assistance funding, as well as \$80 million in aquaculture and poultry assistance. Childers was joined today by representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

“Over the past year, I’ve held various meetings concerning disaster assistance with members of the Mississippi Farm Bureau, the Mississippi Sweet Potato Council, and other producers throughout the First District and the state. Today, after a long upward battle, I was proud to meet with Mississippi producers to announce good news,” said Childers. “This assistance isn’t everything we wanted, but it’s a start. I would like to express my gratitude to Mississippi’s producers for their hard work throughout this upward battle. We would not be half the state we are without our agriculture industry, and I will keep working to secure the assistance our producers need to continue creating jobs and contributing to our economy.”

A photo from the event and a USDA summary of the 2009 Disaster Assistance program are attached.

Childers serves as the only member of the Mississippi delegation on the House Agriculture Committee, representing the agricultural interests of not only North Mississippi, but of the entire state. Childers has been leading the fight to secure agriculture disaster assistance for Mississippi producers for nearly a year.

In November 2009, Childers sent letters urging USDA Secretary Vilsack and Governor Barbour to act quickly in gathering the information necessary to provide these counties with assistance. Subsequently, 79 of Mississippi’s 82 counties – including all 24 counties in the First District –

were granted primary disaster designations.

In December, Childers and Rep. Marion Berry (AR-01) introduced H.R. 4177 to provide timely disaster assistance to producers facing severe crop loss from last fall's excessive rainfall and drought. Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture introduced companion legislation in the Senate. In addition, Childers led a district-wide crop disaster tour with USDA Deputy Under Secretary Michael Scuse to show the USDA the severity of last year's crop losses, as well as the level of assistance hard-hit counties needed in order to recover.

Childers has also held various meetings concerning disaster assistance with members of the Mississippi Farm Bureau, the Mississippi Sweet Potato Council, and other producers throughout the First District and the state.

A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (MS-01) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit www.childers.house.gov